Summary of the Water Quality Partnership for September 20, 2001

1. Bev Poston presented a status report on the rule adoption process for permit fees. The information included meeting notices for public workshops on the proposed rule scheduled in October; the proposed rule adoption timeline, and a summary of the changes proposed for the permit fee rule. The changes are focused on the OFM fiscal growth factor allowed by Initiative 601, clarifying the definition of "animal unit" as it pertains to dairy cows, clarification of fee categories for sand and gravel permits associated with portable units, adding a fee category for application of aquatic pesticides, changing how Ecology determines the fee category where an industrial facility operates in several, clarifying language for fee reduction when a facility is not operating, and clarifying how the fee category will be determined for facilities with subcategories based on gallons/day. The partnership provided feedback for the department to consider. Bev will return with a more flushed-out proposal at the November partnership meeting. If you would like more information, please contact Bev Poston at bpos461@ecy.wa.gov or call 360.407.6425

2. Stephen Bernath presented Ecology's proposal to do a pilot project on effluent trading in the state. The first phase of the project over the next few months is to find an appropriate basin in the state that has or is in the process of having a TMDL done. Stephen asked for opportunities to meet with organizations to explore the potential for a pilot project. Please visit the meeting website (http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/partnership/09_20_01/index.html)for a link to the presentation materials:

3. Megan White presented a proposal to the partnership on how Ecology would like to proceed in getting further stakeholder input on standards, particularly in conjunction with the regional temperature project. There is a link to the proposal at the following site: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/partnership/09_20_01/index.html. Comments are due to Megan on the 30th.

    Dave also handed out the results of Ecology's look at how changing the bacterial standard would affect municipal treatment plants compliance with standards. A link to the results is at the following site: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/partnership/09_20_01/index.html.

    Dave also provided his view of the status of the regional temperature project. You will find a link to the document he prepared at the following site: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/partnership/09_20_01/index.html.

4. Nora Jewett reviewed the status of the 303(d) listing schedule and policy. Since EPA is providing a new assessment program for the listing data, and is proposing a six month delay for when the 303(d) lists will be due and are still preparing guidance documents for the states to use for both the 303(d) listing and the 305(b) report, it is likely that our listing schedule will be delayed. This means that our data submittal period will also be delayed until sometime late fall or early winter. We will likely allow a two month window for submittals.

5. Melodie Selby gave primarily an update of stormwater and described the personnel changes that have occurred as Ecology realigns resources to address stormwater. Please see links to recent documents and the changes as illustrated at the following site: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/partnership/09_20_01/index.html.

6. Gary Bailey presented the history of how Ecology arrived at the recommendation for changing the permit writer's manual for permitting facilities on listed water bodies. There was discussion and a request to have a focused interchange regarding the recommendation. Tentatively an additional meeting has been scheduled for October 25th from 9 a.m. to Noon. A link to Gary's presentation is at the following site: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/partnership/09_20_01/index.html and an agenda for the meeting will be sent out to the partnership in the near future. The discussion will be focused primarily on Ecology's authority to prohibit mixing zones when a TMDL has not been done.